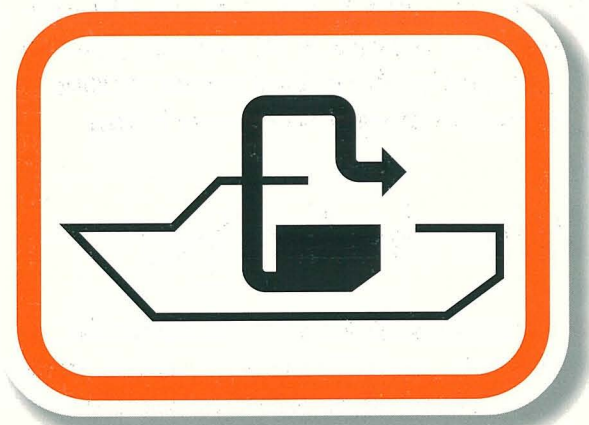




For further information:
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
Division of Federal Aid
Room 140 ARLSQ
4401 North Fairfax Drive
Arlington, VA 22203
703-358-1845

**For information on pumpout and
dump station locations, call
1-800-ASK-FISH**

THE CLEAN VESSEL ACT



KEEP OUR WATER CLEAN— USE PUMPOUTS



THE CLEAN VESSEL ACT

What is the Clean Vessel Act?

- Congress passed the Clean Vessel Act in 1992 (CVA) to help reduce pollution from vessel sewage discharges. The Act established a five-year federal grant program administered by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and authorized \$40 million from the Sport Fish Restoration Account of the Aquatic Resources Trust Fund for use by the States. Federal funds can constitute up to 75% of all approved projects with the remaining funds provided by the States or marinas.

What Happens When You Dump

- Raw or poorly treated sewage can spread disease, contaminate shellfish beds and lower oxygen levels in water. Waterborne diseases including hepatitis, typhoid and cholera can be transmitted by shellfish. Organic matter in sewage is decomposed in the water by bacteria. During this process, the bacteria use oxygen. As a result, sewage in the water may deplete the water's oxygen level, causing stress to fish and other aquatic animals.
- Shellfish are filter feeders that eat tiny food particles filtered through their gills into their stomachs, along with bacteria from sewage. Shellfish can convey nearly all waterborne pathogens to humans.
- Sewage contamination is measured in terms of fecal coliforms — bacteria produced in the intestines of all warm-blooded animals. Test results are expressed as the number of bacteria per 100 milliliters (ml) of water.

Shellfish beds are closed when the coliform count reaches 14 per 100 ml of water. Public beaches are closed to swimmers when the coliform count reaches 200 per 100 ml of water.

- In January 1995, the *Journal of the American Medical Association* reported that outbreaks of viral gastroenteritis in Florida, Georgia and Texas, resulting from the consumption of raw oysters, was traceable to marine sewage disposal on or near oyster harvesting areas in Apalachicola and Galveston Bays. In February 1995, the journal concluded the outbreak resulted from disposal of sewage by commercial and recreational boaters which contaminated the oyster beds. Studies also show the possibility of viral transmission in cooked oysters.
- Areas most likely to be affected are sheltered waters with low flushing rates, waters with significant recreational value, areas set aside for shellfish harvesting, State and Federally designated significant habitats such as those in Coastal Zone programs, as well as waters designated by the Environmental Protection Agency as "No Discharge Areas."
- Currently, vessels use four types of sewage disposal systems. Many boaters use portable toilets which can be



Steve Farrell

THE CLEAN VESSEL ACT

drained at dump stations, however vessels over 26 feet in length typically have Marine Sanitation Devices (MSDs). MSDs are available in three forms, all of which can hold waste for disposal at a pumpout station.

What We Are Doing To Educate Boaters

- The Clean Vessel Act provides a portion of its total funding for educational outreach regarding the effects of boater sewage and the means by which boaters can avoid improper sewage disposal.
- The first goal is to make boaters aware of the importance of proper sewage disposal. The awareness campaign kicked off at the February 1996 Miami Boat Show. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service released its awareness campaign products including the pumpout symbol, slogan, and brochure and also announced the pumpout grant awards. The Act provided \$10 million for 1996 grants, bringing the total amount awarded since 1993 to \$30 million.



Alexis Grant, MD DNR



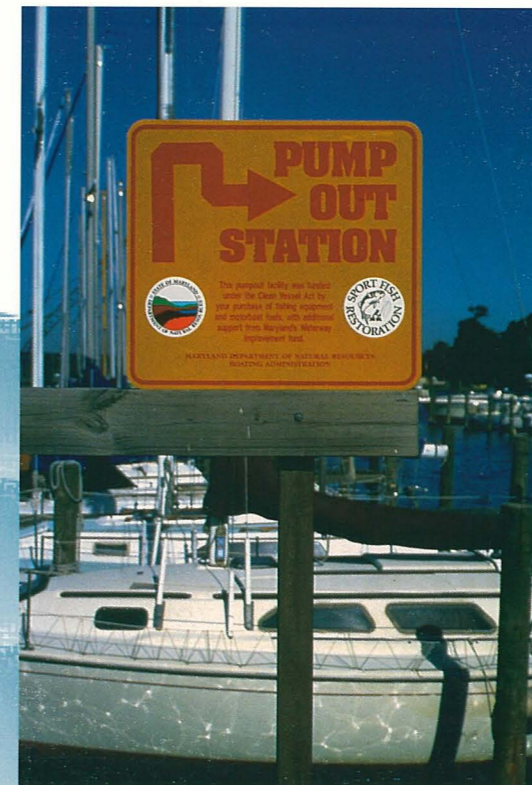
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- The kickoff included representatives from the Department of the Interior, Fish and Wildlife Service, Environmental Protection Agency, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, U.S. Coast Guard, Florida Department of Environmental Protection, and the National Marine Manufacturers Association. These agencies and organizations continue to work with marine interests to distribute materials and educate boaters on the use of pumpout and portable toilet dump stations. States also held similar events. Other agencies and marine community groups may join this partnership.
- The second goal informs boaters and marina operators of sewage disposal problems, educates them on the use and advantages of pumpout and dump stations, and where to best locate such stations. This program will complement and unify existing State programs, sending one clear message: "Keep Our Water Clean — Use Pumpouts."
- Major national CVA educational products include a poster for distribution to more than 22,000 marinas, press and training packets, and various public service announcements for radio, television and print media. States are producing their own education products.

- Boaters and anglers, by calling 1-800-ASK-FISH, a toll-free number established by the Sportfishing Promotion Council, can find the location of pumpout and dump stations, and can report malfunctioning facilities.

What the Act Does

- Grants are available to the States on a competitive basis for the construction and/or renovation, operation, and maintenance of pumpout and portable toilet dump stations.
- Currently States submit grant proposals, by May 1 of each year, to one of seven Fish and Wildlife Service regional offices for review and submission to the agency's Washington, DC headquarters. The Service's Division of Federal Aid then convenes a panel including representatives from the Service's Washington Office of the Division of Federal Aid, the National Oceanic and



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Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), the Environmental Protection Agency, and the U.S. Coast Guard. The panel reviews, ranks and makes funding recommendations to the Director of the Fish and Wildlife Service.

- The Director gives priority consideration to grant proposals which provide installation and/or operation of pumpout and dump stations under Federally approved State plans. Proposals offering the greatest benefit to the intended waters and the general public also take precedence.
- All recreational vessels must have access to pumpouts funded under the Clean Vessel Act. NOAA will mark pumpout and dump station locations on its nautical charts. Halfway through the program, grants have been awarded to install 1,200 pumpout stations and 630 dump stations. A maximum fee of \$5.00 may be charged for use of pumpout facilities constructed or maintained with grant funds.
- After a public comment period the Federal agencies, in cooperation with private organizations and the marine community, developed a pumpout symbol and a national slogan (below). Both will appear on products as well as at marinas supporting the Clean Vessel Act.



**KEEP OUR
WATER CLEAN—
USE PUMPOUTS**